

Facility Closure

4.1 Introduction

Facility closure can be temporary or permanent. Temporary closure is defined as a shutdown for a period exceeding the time required for normal maintenance, including closure for overhaul or replacement of the reciprocating engines. Causes for temporary closure include a disruption in the supply of natural gas or damage to the plant from earthquake, fire, storm, or other natural acts. Permanent closure is defined as a cessation in operations with no intent to restart operations owing to plant age, damage to the plant beyond repair, adverse economic conditions, or other significant reasons. Section 4.2 discusses temporary facility closure; Section 4.3 discusses permanent facility closure.

4.2 Temporary Closure

For a temporary facility closure, where there is no release of hazardous materials, security of the facility will be maintained on a 24-hour basis, and the California Energy Commission (CEC) and other responsible agencies will be notified. Depending on the length of shutdown necessary, a contingency plan for the temporary cessation of operations will be implemented. The contingency plan will be conducted to ensure conformance with applicable laws, ordinances, regulations, and standards (LORS) and the protection of public health, safety, and the environment. The plan, depending on the expected duration of the shutdown, may include the draining of chemicals from storage tanks and other equipment and the safe shutdown of equipment. Wastes will be disposed of according to applicable LORS, as discussed in Section 8.14.

Where the temporary closure includes damage to the facility, and there is a release or threatened release of acutely hazardous materials into the environment, procedures will be followed as set forth in a Risk Management Plan (RMP), to be developed as described in Section 8.5. Procedures will include methods to control releases, notification of applicable authorities and the public, emergency response, and training for plant personnel in responding to and controlling releases of hazardous materials. Once the immediate problem is solved, and the acutely hazardous materials release is contained and cleaned up, temporary closure will proceed as described above for a closure where there is no release of hazardous materials.

4.3 Permanent Closure

The planned life of the generation facility is 30 years. However, if the generation facility is still economically viable, it could be operated longer. It is also possible that the facility could become economically noncompetitive earlier than 30 years, forcing early decommissioning. Whenever the facility is permanently closed, the closure procedure will follow a plan that will be developed as described below.

The removal of the facility from service, or decommissioning, may range from “mothballing” to the removal of equipment and appurtenant facilities, depending on conditions at the time. Because the conditions that would affect the decommissioning decision are largely unknown at this time, these conditions would be presented to the CEC, California Public Utilities Commission, California Coastal Commission, and Humboldt County when more information is available and the timing for decommissioning is more imminent.

To ensure that public health and safety and the environment are protected during decommissioning, a decommissioning plan will be submitted to the CEC for approval prior to decommissioning. The plan will discuss the following:

- Proposed decommissioning activities for the facility and appurtenant facilities constructed as part of the facility
- Conformance of the proposed decommissioning activities to applicable LORS and local/regional plans
- Activities necessary to restore the site if the plan requires removal of equipment and appurtenant facilities
- Decommissioning alternatives other than complete restoration
- Associated costs of the proposed decommissioning and the source of funds to pay for the decommissioning

In general, the decommissioning plan for the facility will attempt to maximize the recycling of facility components. Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) will attempt to sell unused chemicals back to the suppliers or other purchasers or users. Equipment containing chemicals will be drained and shut down to ensure public health and safety and to protect the environment. Nonhazardous wastes will be collected and disposed of in appropriate landfills or waste collection facilities. Hazardous wastes will be disposed of according to applicable LORS. The site will be secured 24 hours per day during the decommissioning activities, and PG&E will provide periodic update reports to the CEC and Humboldt County, and other appropriate parties as such activities progress.